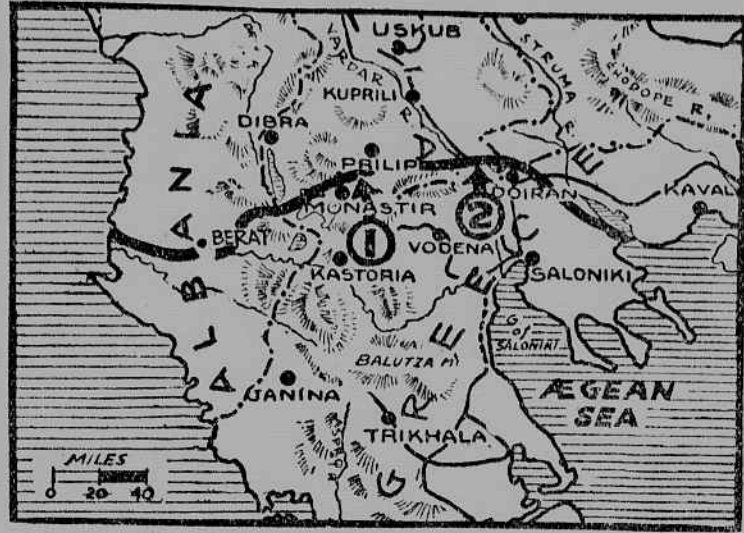


The Great War—1504th Day

THE DRIVES IN THE BALKANS



Franco-Serbian forces attacking in the direction of arrow (1) have advanced five miles on a twelve mile front. Greeks are driving up the Vardar valley (2).

The Official Statements

FRENCH

PARIS (NIGHT).—North of the Aisne the opposing artillery have been active.

In the Champagne French troops carried out a raid and took prisoners west of Maison de Champagne. Between St. Hilaire le Grand and Mont Sans Nom and also north of Rheims a number of enemy raids were repulsed.

PARIS (NIGHT), Sept. 16.—During the day our troops continued their attacks in the region northeast and east of Nancy. In spite of the resistance of the Germans, we have advanced one kilometre on a front of about four kilometres. Six hundred prisoners, two cannon and 105 machine guns were taken.

BRITISH

LONDON (NIGHT).—Fighting of a minor character has continued to day northwest of St. Quentin. Our troops have gained ground in the neighborhood of Holnon village.

On the northern portion of the front also local engagements have taken place. Our troops captured a German post west of La Bassée, taking several prisoners; new posts have been established by us northeast of Neuve Chapelle and in the neighborhood of Ploegsteert. East of Vierstraat a German raiding party was repulsed.

LONDON (DAY).—Our troops made progress yesterday in the direction of Le Verquiere, northwest of St. Quentin.

We improved our positions slightly yesterday and during the night northwest of Hulluch (between Lens and La Bassée) and northeast of Neuve Chapelle (Flanders front).

GERMAN

BERLIN (NIGHT).—Between the Aisne and the Aisne renewed enemy attacks failed.

Yankee Tanks Make Daylight Raid Upon foe

Continued from page 1

to prepared positions behind the Hindenburg line.

The Germans are bringing reinforcements into the St. Mihiel salient area, but these show no disposition of making a determined stand on this side of the Hindenburg line. The American forces which are putting the pressure on the enemy in the Moselle Valley to-day found but weak resistance, and after a burst of rifle and machine gun fire the enemy retreated toward Pagny-sur-Moselle, an industrial town, where three great smokestacks stick into the sky.

From an observation post on a Moselle hill it was possible to see the attack. Our artillery seemed to be doing excellent work; the shells were falling wherever our infantry reported the enemy concentrations. The machine gun fire, which was easily heard coming from the woods northwest of Vandœuvre, ceased when our artillery concentrated on the wood. We could hear the reports of our guns and hear the scream of shells exploding on the wood. We could see the American advance line working its way forward in small groups. The enemy placed machine guns in the woods, and the supporting lines, walking slowly in Indian file behind, were distinguishable.

The enemy shelling was erratic and desultory, and sometimes his heavy shells would break east of the Moselle, where there was no activity occurring. It is evident that the enemy has withdrawn his guns far back, and our advance will find no serious opposition until the Hindenburg line is either reached or crossed. All, however, depends on the plans of General Pershing whether the advance will continue much further at present.

Our troops now have passed their fixed objectives, and operations going on must be termed local and not a general continuation of the brilliant operation which wiped out the big salient.

Though the American army's first important all-American victory is complete and the operation finished from a strategic point of view, results, aside from territory, prisoners and material captured, are beginning to show. Our operation was designed simply to wipe out the St. Mihiel salient.

The American victory was made possible by the safe advance of the French troops east to Verdun toward Etain. Look at the map and it will show the advance toward Etain before the St. Mihiel salient was reduced, rather a delicate operation because, with the Meuse River at their backs, the French

Military Comment

By William L. McPherson

M. R. BALFOUR has intimated that a real Allied offensive in the Balkans is under way. And in the last three or four days Franco-Serbian and Greek attacks on the Salonica front have made considerable progress.

An Allied offensive in the Balkans would recall many bitter memories. For the Entente the Balkans have been the grave of great opportunities and high hopes. But for diplomatic and military blunders in 1914 and 1915 the whole course of the war might have been changed through a successful descent on Constantinople. With Turkey isolated and the Dardanelles in Allied hands, the Entente powers might have saved Russia from dissolution and been able to win the war without the aid of the United States.

In the days before the U-boat had been developed the eastern Mediterranean was a safe and convenient sphere of operation. It is pretty well established now that, with a little more skill and energy, the Gallipoli peninsula could have been seized early in 1915 and the Turks driven out of Constantinople. Then Serbia and Rumania would have been saved and the Russian front could have been linked up with the Western front.

The tragic failure of the Anzac expedition and of Entente diplomacy in Bulgaria and Greece condemned the friendly Balkan states to conquest by the Teuton powers and knit Bulgaria and Turkey firmly into the Central European Alliance. The Entente has maintained a large army in the Salonica fortified camp for nearly three years. It could not help Serbia or Montenegro. It could not cooperate with the Rumanians. It

which has prevailed from the beginning of operations.

Passing along a portion of the great Paris-Metz highway I saw our anti-aircraft guns pecking the sky continually where the Boche "planes, tiny in the altitude, were trying to come over our lines. I rode many miles to-day along this highway, which has been so near hostile lines for years.

Road Is Camouflaged

For almost the entire length it is camouflaged on the side toward the old enemy line and occasionally camouflaged overhead, which gives it the appearance of riding through a great elongated hurler box. The Germans have been pushed far back from the roadway now almost everywhere, and it is being rapidly repaired for heavy traffic.

I followed the Paris-Metz highway into Pont-a-Mousson to-day, where the enemy still remains nearest to it. His shells were dropping occasionally, and the Allied batteries were making such a din with return fire as we entered the streets that it was almost ear-splitting. The German line is about two thousand yards north of the city to-day, but with the present rapid moving warfare it is impossible to say where the enemy will be to-morrow, except that he will be no nearer.

Moving through the city's street gave my companion and myself a sense of marked loneliness. It was a deserted city in the strictest sense. Homes and business houses stood ready for habitation, but no human being could be seen. Signs on store windows loomed out brazenly for eyes that had fled when the city was evacuated months ago. If any credit can be given to the enemy for anything, it is that the pretty Moselle River city of Pont-a-Mousson has not been wiped out the man. It is remarkably intact, only occasionally buildings have been married by shell fire. The city normally had about 10,000 inhabitants. It was not before we reached the big enclosed public square, which was headed by a circle of breastworks, ready for a German invasion which never came, that we saw humans. They were a few French and American soldiers and fourteen aged refugees, the latter on route to the rear.

The American soldiers were just releasing a carrier pigeon with a message from our line north of Pont-a-Mousson when we arrived. The message had been relayed back by ground wire telephone. It told of a slight advance behind the retreating Germans.

Shells continually shrieked over on to the retreating enemy and the positions behind. Some of these, incidentally, were 15-inch shells fired from American naval guns.

Later we crossed the Moselle, which

has been able only to hold Greece in line and to reconquer a little strip of Serbian Macedonia about Monastir.

Now that Greece is ready in a military way and the German and Austrian contingents have been largely withdrawn from the Balkans, the Allied investment in the Salonica enterprise may begin to show some returns. Bulgaria is compelled to defend Macedonia single-handed. The Bulgarians and Turks have quarrelled over the disposition of the spoils acquired through the Brest-Litovsk and Bucharest treaties. They are at present very unfriendly allies.

Last spring it was reported that Bulgarian divisions were serving on the Italian front. Dispatches from Holland now say that Ludendorff has secured some Bulgarian troops for use in Belgium.

At all events, Bulgaria faces a critical situation. Her front opposite Salonica and Monastir is overextended and undermined. She can be compelled to retire north over the mountains, and possibly to draw out of southern Serbia altogether. In her extremity she will certainly call back any soldiers she has on the Italian and French fronts and demand help from the Germans and Austrians. Ferdinand the Crafty sold himself for Macedonia. His dynasty will not be safe, if he loses it. The Turks will not help him. And Germany and Austria-Hungary are too hard up for men to waste any assisting him to retain the territorial spoils which they delivered to him according to bargain in 1915.

The two Allied offensives against the Bulgarians—the Franco-Serbian and the Greek—have both opened with striking successes. Each is on

nearly as if the machine was going to crash, when the pilot made one last effort to flatten out and try to land. The plane responded weakly to the controls and half flattened. The flames, which had been flowing toward the rear of the machine, away from the pilot, immediately communicated forward to the gasoline tank, causing an explosion, which was followed by the tearing of the machine into bits and tearing the heavy engine from the fuselage. The pilot tried to explain the miracle in an ambulance after he was picked up.

"I believe that the explosion broke my fall," he said. "I remembered nothing after that, but here I am alive." He suffered a slight flesh wound in combat, but heavy garments saved him from bad burns. Though his face and hands are slightly singed, he'll be back in the air within a month.

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a front of about fifteen miles. The Franco-Serbian armies have advanced more than five miles to the east of Monastir and taken more than 3,000 prisoners. They are working down the valley of the Cerna River, which flows northeast and empties into the Vardar River south of Veles. An advance in this direction would threaten Prilep, an important southern Serbian town, about forty miles north of Monastir. The Greeks are pushing up the east side of the Vardar, between the river and Lake Doiran. The Salonica-Uskub railroad follows the Vardar Valley. And control of that valley means control of southern Serbia. It is worth noting that a Jugo-

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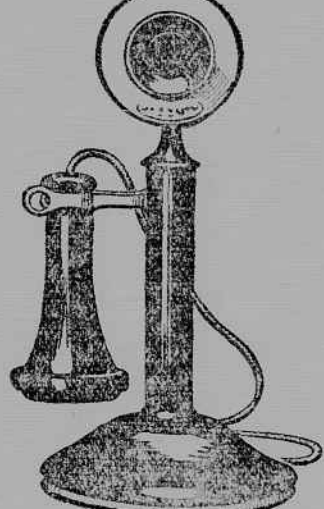
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attacks are being made on the enemy's line without further preparation. The British front was enhanced by terrific artillery duels around Havincourt. The Germans seem to expect another drive by Haig and are trying to prevent concentration of men and guns in front of the Hindenburg defenses. Infantry fighting is limited to patrol engagements. Both sides are making great numbers of reconnaissance and raids in the Champagne and Vosges.

Germans Set Fire To Towns Along Hindenburg Line

AMERICAN ARMY HEADQUARTERS IN LORRAINE, Sept. 16.—Evidence is accumulating that the enemy intends withdrawing behind the Hindenburg line in Lorraine if he is pressed any further. He is burning towns along the Moselle.

Prisoners taken report that the entire artillery of the 21st German Division was captured in the American operation on this front.

The division that was used to bear the brunt of the attack in the lungs in the salient east of St. Mihiel, it appears, was the 35th American Division. It was ordered to maintain a holding action until all the German troops were withdrawn. In consequence of this it suffered very heavy losses, especially in prisoners.

Yesterday was the quietest day on this front since the beginning of the offensive last Thursday. There was little infantry activity and only moderate artillery.

Point-a-Mousson and Dieulouard, four miles to the south, were shelled by the enemy, who mazed in a few mortar gas projectiles with his other shells.

The Germans apparently were digging themselves in behind the Hindenburg line today.

U. S. Guns Hammer New German Line Beyond St. Mihiel

AMERICAN ARMY ON THE LORRAINE FRONT, Sept. 17.—American heavy artillery and aviators made a sympathetic response to the German challenge all along the newly established line. The enemy bombarded certain points with vigor and threw over quantities of gas. The Germans endeavored to force their way through the aerial defenses, but evidence was that the lack of gas in the German camp led to an attempt to regain the territory they have lost. Their High Command apparently intends to adhere to the policy which resulted in the relinquishing of a large section without a bitter struggle.

Reports brought in by aviators, as well as information obtained from prisoners and verified by patrols show the Germans are strengthening their trenches along the Hindenburg line, but there is nothing to show they are reinforcing their lines to a degree that might indicate a strong counter movement.

Patrols sent out by the Americans have been successful not only in reconnaissance but in bringing in prisoners. Many of the prisoners were of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd divisions, but among them were the crews of several lost or isolated machine guns. In some cases they had been taken from counter-attacking parties.

There was much German activity to-day on the extreme right of the line, where the enemy vigorously shelled and gassed the woods north of Pont-a-Mousson and in the vicinity of Varray. Machine-gun action north of Beney was spirited, while the German artillery was active from Haumont to Von Pleisier Farm. To the east of Von Pleisier there has been some skirmishing, but it was of little consequence. The Allied outposts generally are pushing toward that region.

The comparative ease with which the Germans were driven from the positions they held for more than three years is believed in some quarters to have been a result of underestimating the ability of the Americans. It is considered possible they may have ex-

pected General Pershing's troops, carried away by enthusiasm, to overstep the limits of prudence by advancing into a region where they might have been forced to sacrifice large numbers of men or to retire. It has been specifically stated, however, that the operation was one for limited objectives only.

Yank Patrol Kills 7 Petty Officers And Captures 5

(By The Associated Press)

WITH THE AMERICAN FORCES IN LORRAINE, Sept. 17 (3:30 p. m.).—An American patrol in a raid made early this morning in the general region of Haumont, northwest of Thiaucourt, captured five non-commissioned officers and killed seven other non-commissioned officers.

The German prisoners said they had received orders to hold their positions unless strongly attacked. The non-commissioned officers were from an officers' school in the vicinity of Conflans. They said they had been ordered to the front for practical experience.

French Drive foe From Cave Shelters In Desperate Fights

(By The Associated Press)

WITH THE FRENCH ARMIES IN THE FIELD, Sept. 16 (Night).—Creeping on all four over plateaus and in the hills, the French are seeking out hidden machine gun nests and reducing them with grenades when found.

General Mangin's troops are making every effort to break through the formidable lines of the German front. The French are seeking out hidden machine gun nests and reducing them with grenades when found.

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